

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 193

By Kurita

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Head Coach Melanie Balcomb and the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team on winning the 2007 Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball Tournament Championship.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those extraordinary athletic teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to the State of Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this State; and

WHEREAS, the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team is one such estimable team that achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2006-2007 season, establishing a record of twenty-eight wins and six losses, including the SEC Tournament Championship Title; and

WHEREAS, reaching top-ten overall national ranking during the regular season, the 2006-2007 Vanderbilt Commodores women's basketball team was an offensive powerhouse, at times leading the nation in field goal percentage and three-point field goal percentage as best exhibited on February 4, 2007, when they shot an NCAA record 76.2% against Alabama, hitting 32 of 42 shots; and

WHEREAS, the Commodores rolled through the tournament, prevailing over upset-minded Florida, 105-77, demolishing perennial powerhouse Georgia, 81-56, as they avenged a regular season loss, and advancing to reach the championship game to face the ferocious Lady Tigers of Louisiana State University, a team Vanderbilt had just recently rallied to defeat on Senior Night at Memorial Gym; and

WHEREAS, led by the heroic effort of Dee Davis and the outstanding play of SEC Tournament MVP Carla Thomas, the Commodores valiantly withstood every punch and

counter-punch delivered by their foe in the title match, winning an extremely tight contest by the score of 51-45; and

WHEREAS, joining Vandy teammate Christina Wirth on the All-Tournament team, Carla Thomas received her second SEC Tournament Most Valuable Player award, having previously received the prestigious honor in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the esteemed members of this championship women's basketball team include Dee Davis, Carla Thomas, Caroline Williams, Liz Sherwood, Jennifer Risper, Christina Wirth, Amy Malo, Ashlee Bridge, Lauren Lueders, Merideth Marsh, Jessica Mooney, and Amber Norton; and

WHEREAS, the 2006-2007 Commodores have enjoyed the leadership and exemplary skills of an outstanding trio of seniors who also serve as Team Captains: Dee Davis, Carla Thomas, and Caroline Williams, the first trio of four-year seniors in Vandy history to each record 1,000 point career totals; and

WHEREAS, one of the premier point guards in the nation as chosen by ESPN, and an All-SEC First Team selection, Dee Davis holds the all-time record for assists at Vanderbilt, male or female, with 730 as she led the SEC in assists for the second consecutive year and firmly imprinted her name on a host of top-ten Vandy career basketball records as she collected 1,093 career points to join the Commodore 1,000 point club; and

WHEREAS, a unanimous All-SEC First Team selection and only the third player ever to be named SEC Tournament MVP twice, Carla Thomas tallied 1,774 career points, becoming the sixth all-time scorer in Vanderbilt history on her way to being ranked in the all-time Top Ten in eight different categories for the Commodores; and

WHEREAS, a one-time walk-on who ultimately became the best three-point shooter in the nation, Caroline Williams was named to the All-SEC Second Team, leading the SEC and the nation in three-point shooting efficiency while setting several all-time individual and season records at Vanderbilt, as she joined the 1,000 point club with 1,005 career points; and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Melanie Balcomb laid the groundwork for this year's championship team by sharing with these young women her substantial knowledge of

basketball, her many years of coaching and athletic experience, and her passion both for the sport of basketball and for excellence in every endeavor; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the able leadership of Head Coach Balcomb, the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Staff includes Assistant Coach Stephanie Norman, Assistant Coach Vicky Picott, Assistant Coach Lisa Cermignano, Director of Operations Justin VanOrman, Video Coordinator Shaquala Williams, Administrative Assistant Vicki Spina, and Graduate Assistant Coach Sarah Klaassen; and

WHEREAS, the Vanderbilt Commodores women's basketball team also enjoyed the services of Athletic Trainer Michele Loftis, Strength Coach Tasha Weddle, Student Trainer Kim Callen, and Team Managers Hadley Zeavin, Brittany Smith, Angie Booker, and Veronica Calvin; and

WHEREAS, the basketball players at Vanderbilt University epitomize all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved a premier level of success in competition and academics. The perseverance, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young women not only made possible a championship basketball season, but also surely bodes well for their success in every future enterprise; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the Vanderbilt University Commodores women's basketball team and specially recognize their extraordinary achievements both on and off the basketball court as examples of the exceptional quality of the youth of America; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate the coaches, staff, and members of the Vanderbilt University Women's Basketball Team on winning the 2007 Southeastern Conference Tournament Championship and that we wish the Commodores well in all their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.